

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL CHARACTER COUNTS WEEK

SPEECH OF

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 24, 2001

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of establishing a National Character Counts week. Developing strong character in our children today ensures the foundation of our Nation for the future.

Today's youth experience events that were unimaginable 40 or 50 years ago. Public scandals, violence by and against youth, and now for the first time in their lives they have seen a hatred for the character of our Nation. This exposure to negative influences threaten their physical and psychological well-being. Recognizing the importance of strength of character through this legislation can help us combat these negative influences.

I support funding character education and I am pleased that the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act included language authorizing the Secretary of Education to make grants for the design and implementation of character education programs. Our youth deserve our support for developing the strength of character necessary to maintain a strong nation.

Maryland has been a shining example of the benefits character education programs bring to schools. Three Maryland schools have been recognized as National Schools of Character under the Character Education Partnership. In fact, these schools reduced the number of discipline referrals and suspensions, within a caring learning environment. Also, as a result of the program, student test scores and parent involvement in student education increased.

Character education programs help students identify and develop character traits that prepare them for life. Through trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, citizenship, and honesty, our children can possess the tools for leadership. In addition, the programs recognize that character development does not necessarily begin at school, but rather at home with parents and family.

It is the responsibility of all adults to demonstrate good character traits to our young people. This includes faith communities, schools, and youth, civic, and human service organizations. All of us are responsible for the character and conduct of our young people because each of us reflects the values of our society.

Therefore, I urge all Members to support this legislation and encourage schools around the Nation to participate in character education programs, and our young people to become responsible citizens for today and tomorrow.

AIR TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AND SYSTEM STABILIZATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 21, 2001

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, it is with great disappointment that I vote against this legislation before us tonight.

The tragic events of September 11, 2001, have shocked and saddened all of us. In the weeks, months, and even years ahead, they will challenge us to fight for our freedoms and our values, and to figure out precisely how best to do that. As a Member of the U.S. Congress, representing not just the 650,000 people of my district, but the Nation as a whole, I want to do my part to decide what action must be taken and to constantly work with the people I represent so that their views and concerns can be heard, and so that I can keep them informed of the actions our Nation is taking and plans to take.

Last week, I voted to authorize necessary and appropriate force in response to the attacks, and I voted for \$40 billion in emergency funding to assist the victims and fund the investigation. I looked forward to supporting a package that would keep America's economy strong, by providing assistance to the American airline industry, helping our workers, and improving safety so that Americans feel confident in our skies again.

I looked forward to doing all of this in a bipartisan way. I know there are many differences of opinion in this body, even in times of great national emergency, regarding corporate liability, job training, federal control of aviation security, and other critically important issues, but I hoped that both sides would be able to give a little and compromise so that we could quickly put forth a package that would help heal the economic wounds that have been inflicted since September 11.

The leadership of both parties in both the House and the Senate and their staffs have worked tirelessly to put together a package that could garner bipartisan support and address all of these issues I've outlined, and I appreciate that. However, I don't believe this package in front of us tonight is nearly well-balanced enough because it doesn't address the worker concerns or safety concerns. I am opposing it because I think we need to go back to the drawing board and fix it. If it takes until tomorrow, or Monday, or Tuesday, we need to get this right.

This legislation provides \$5 billion in direct aid to the airlines, \$10 billion in loan guarantees to airlines, government aid with insurance for airlines, and caps the airlines' financial liability. I support all of these provisions.

However, I believe it would be irresponsible not to also address safety issues and employee issues. After all, we cannot have a strong and vibrant airline industry in this country without people who want to fly, and that

will require both people who have money in their pockets to buy airline tickets, and a dramatic improvement in consumer confidence that will only come with real safety improvements.

This legislation will cost over \$15 billion. I find it unbelievable that we could not find one dollar to cushion the blow for the workers who will be affected—by latest estimates, approximately 100,000 workers will be laid off as a direct result of the attacks on September 11. Bolstering the airline industry so that we can minimize these layoffs is imperative, but the sad truth is, even this \$15 billion will not save very many of the jobs lost due to the terrorist attacks. Many workers in my district, who work at Boeing's 737 plant in Renton, fear a layoff notice as early as next month. I'm sure the thousands of Alaska Airlines and SeaTac Airport employees in my district are worried too. I have faith that the industry and the economy will recover, but that won't help with these workers' mortgage, electric bill, or car payment.

Right now, if a group of workers can prove that their job was lost due to trade, they are eligible for a series of benefits including job training and income support. Why can't we extend the same benefits for the thousands of workers who will lose their jobs and have trouble finding a new one right away? Can't we send just a few dollars to the men and women who will no longer fly the planes, sell the tickets, load the bags, attend to the passengers, or build the planes?

Before he passed away, my father was one of those men. He worked for thirty years as a ramp serviceman for United Airlines at SeaTac Airport, so I know firsthand how important these jobs are to Americans, and I can't imagine what my father would have said if, after this attack, Congress had passed a relief package that gave \$15 billion to the airline industry and not a dollar for the thousands of workers who will be impacted within the next weeks.

Let me just say a few words about safety and security issues. I strongly support the U.S. airline industry, and I believe that we should, at this critical moment in history, stand behind them. However, I think we have to fairly and reasonably examine the events of September 11. Our current airport security system allowed four U.S. planes to be hijacked by men with knives, some of whom were on the terrorist watch list. It's safe to say that the airport security system failed us.

If we are passing legislation to improve the condition of the airline industry, shouldn't we also address this issue? Perhaps airport security should truly be a security issue, not merely a business issue that, until last week, was mostly considered in terms of a company's bottom line. Don't get me wrong—the bottom line is important to our capitalist economy, but I have come to the conclusion that airport security should not be subject to those concerns. There are many interesting ideas out there for

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